

JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

Chairman

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(Addenda: page 4, line 20, insert, "meeting".)

Special material in these pages has been reported upon by a team of reporters and writers: The Rev. Richard Merritt, Chairman, English Language Publicity Committee, Protestant 100th Anniversary Celebration; The Rev. Vern Rossman, Avaco, Secretary, English Language Publicity Committee; Dr. K.C. Hendricks. In addition, material from many newspaper articles in Japan (English editions) were utilized. Final composition and editing, R.W. Northup.

ENTENARY MEETINGS: November 1-7

With churches throughout Japan celebrating the anniversary of the centennial of the Protestant Christian mission in Japan on Sunday, November 1, the first public meeting was held at Hibiya Park. More than 5,000 Japanese Church School students presented their gifts of yen to help build a new church in the Philippines. Cement will be purchased in Japan with the fund and shipped to the Philippine Federation of Christian Churches.

Names of contributors were listed in a "Friendship Book" and were presented to the Philipping Ambassador Manuel A. Adeva through the press counselor of the embassy, Jose F. Zaide. Mr. Zaide said: the gesture would no doubt "invoke warm and friendly resonance in the Philippines, particularly among the Protestant segment of the population." To close the rally, Japanese Boy and Girl Scouts released 1000 multi-colored balloons, symbolizing "friendly feelings of Japanese Protestant youths toward their brethren in the Philippines."

On Monday morning, at a special convocation at Rikkyo Daigaku (St. Paul's University, Episcopal), honorary degrees were conferred on Dr. W. A. Visser't Hooft and Canon Max A.C. Warren.

GOVERNOR OF TOKYO FETES GUESTS, LEADERS:

His Excellency, the Honorable Ryutaro Azuma, Governor of Tokyo, gave a reception for honored guests and church leaders on Monday afternoon at the Prince Hotel in Tokyo.

The five hundred guests arrived on foot and in a steady stream of taxis and private cars, through the heaviest downpour of rain this fall. The reception, planned originally to be held in the famous gardens of the hotel, formerly a property of the Imperial family of Japan, took place in the extensive banquet hall of the new addition.

Because of illness the governor was unable to attend and was represented by the Honorable En Ota, Vice-Governor, who received the guests and delivered a warm message of greeting which recognized the significant contribution of Christianity to Japan over the years. Distinguished guests, representing mission boards of the West, responded with congratulatory remarks and expressed their appreciation for the reception.

Following this, the National Christian Council of Japan entertained the retired missionaries and other overseas guests at a banquet in the hotel. Presiding and extending a warm welcome was Dr. Takeshi Muto, Chairman of the NCC. Among those responding was Dr. Visser't Hooft, Executive Secretary of the World Council of Churches.

Dr. W.A. VISSER'T HOOFT SPEAKS ON "OUR COMMON CHRISTIAN CALLING"

At a central Tokyo church, Fujimicho, Dr. Visser't Hooft spoke on Monday night, November 2 to an audience which filled the sanctuary and basement. Declaring that "we do not pat ourselves on the back ... but stand before God and ask God to tell us ... what is the specific message he wants to give us today." Noting that the Christian calling cannot be "individual" but must be shared with the community he urged Christians to participate consciously in that Christian community. Citing the Epistle to Timothy's words, that "we are called not by virtue of our own works, but in virtue of His, God's own purpose," he noted that this calling is a fulfillment of God's own promise and purpose. Thus, our calling is "to a common task and mission in the world and to the world." The origin of the Ecumenical movement is thus seen to be "the sense of the cosmic common calling by God."

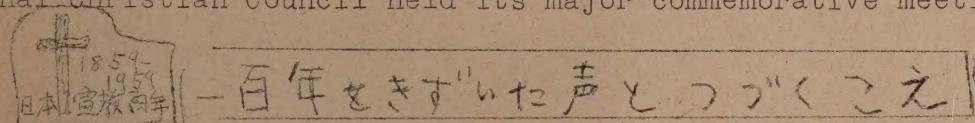
Speaking of three aspects of this calling, he pointed to: (1) "witness together," recognizing that "all churches are equally bearers of this common mandate. (Thus it is impossible)... to say that some are sending churches and some receiving churches." As a consequence, we must oppose all syncretism, that is "attempts to mix the various elements of religions, or the various forms of religious relativism which say that all religions are equally good or bad." Such thought is the product of our cosmopolitan, relativistic society. (2) "Service." Two manifestations of the service are (a) within the fellowship (diaconia) and (b) in relation to the world, "helping all those who are in need. "That is why the ecumenical fellowship ... has accepted responsibility on a much broader field." These bring special needs, such as the present World Refugee Year or the continuing "horrible problem of the nations which remain to such a large extent hungry nations." For this reason, "we try to find ways and means whereby all the churches together can enter into the fight against hunger. (3) "Fellowship" We still have a big task to eliminate class or race churches. We must continue attempts to relate ourselves to Russian churches for we rep-

recent the Ecumenical Movement "Which does not think in ideological terms."

In closing, he declared: "...unity is the fruit of a common obedience to a common calling. " " " I meet too many people who are afraid of unity. " " " What they are really afraid of is some centralized, oppressive unity. But why do we think ... this is the only form of unity...? Isn't it possible to have that other unity that Paul talks about, a full sharing in the gifts given to the church, a common message to the world, a common sacramental life? " " " My hope is that this celebration . . . may be an occasion of the new realization of our common Christian calling and that fruit of the realization will be unity in Christ."

EN THOUSAND ATTEND SERVICE, HONOR PASTORS AND BELIEVERS:

Tuesday, November 3, was Culture Day, a major Japanese holiday which falls on the birthday of the Meiji Emperor and which was changed from a memorial celebration to a wider concern for Japan's new life after the war. Early cloudy skies turned into brilliant weather by mid-morning; trains and roads were crowded by vacationing millions of Tokyo, many of them visiting shrines. Fireworks burst frequently over the Meiji shrine, only a few moments drive from the Tokyo Municipal Auditorium where the National Christian Council held its major commemorative meeting.



More than ten thousand packed the auditorium under the centennial emblem and the slogan "Voices that Built a Hundred Years and Voices that Continue." Singing was led by a mass chorus of nearly 200 voices, drawn from Tokyo churches and schools. Their fine singing of selections from Messiah brought stares of wonder from many overseas delegates.

The sermon at the service of worship was given by the Rt. Rev. Hinsuke Ashiro, Presiding Bishop of the Anglican-Episcopal Communion of Japan and Vice-Chairman of the NCCJ. He cited as a major problem of mission work in Japan in the past, puritanism, which he claimed has been a real barrier to evangelism. For the present, Christianity has to come to terms with the amazing growth of the so-called "new religions" of Japan, without either fearing them or being tempted to imitate their ways. Bishop Ashiro said the major distinction between Christianity and these religions is one of recognizing the limits of human power. The new religions rely on this worldly practices and beliefs, whereas Christianity takes seriously the limitations of humankind. He said our task is to show forth our joy in the message of Good News which overcomes our limitations.

The Rev. Keikichi Shirai, Moderator of the United Church of Christ in Japan (Kyodan), presided in the service of worship. The Scripture was read by the Rev. Atsumi Tasaka. Two remarkable solos were sung by Miss Teruko Uraguchi, soprano.

Following the opening worship, ceremonies were presided over by the Rev. Rokuro Yamauchi, Lutheran pastor. Greetings from bodies which they presented were given by Dr. Visser't Hooft, WCC; Canon Max A.C. Warren, US (Anglican), England; Bishop Arthur Moore, NCC of the U.S.A.; Dr. Charles Ranson, IMC; the Rev. Toivo Rapeli, Lutheran Evangelical Federation of Finland; Dr. Eberhard Muller, Evangelical Academy, Germany, who brought Greetings from Bishop Otto Dibelius; Dr. Henry Little, United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.

In his greeting, Dr. Visser't Hooft spoke for the WCC, expressing joy of Christian churches throughout the world for this centenary in Japan. "If one member of the body of Christ is honored, all the members rejoice together." Although Japanese Christians think their numbers are so small, they must remember the brief time the Gospel has been preached in Japan. "We know that from the relation of our own family to Japan," he noted. Then he told how his great-grandfather had come from Holland 125 years ago, hoping to enter Japan at Deshima, Nagasaki from the frigate he commanded, but he was refused entry. That was a time when there was no Protestant Christianity in Japan. --- We must remember that God's Word works spontaneously. God does the opening and we must follow. "The second century of Protestant Christianity in Japan is one in which God will take new initiative and we must watch when God is opening a door and go through it."

Dr. J.M.T. Winther, 93 years old and an active missionary with 68 years of service in Japan, spoke expressing his faith in the greater advances of Christianity in the second century.

Three thousand two hundred churchmen with records of 50 years or more of faithful membership in Japanese churches were recognized in a special gift of a memorial plate on which was inscribed "... to the ends of the earth." Eighty-two persons who have served the church as evangelists for 50 years or more and eighty-nine who have served 40 years or more, were also recognized with special centennial memorial editions of the Bible.

CENTENNIAL LECTURES: THE HON. T. KITAMURA and DR. Z. WATANABE

That evening the Centennial Lectures were delivered to a large audience gathered in the Sendagaya municipal auditorium by the Honorable Tokutaro Kitamura, prominent statesman, diplomat and Christian layman, and Dr. Zenta Watanabe, outstanding scholar of the Old Testament and popular preacher.

Mr. Kitamura made a plea for the recognition of the place and potential of the laity under the title, "Thy Will Be Done." Dr. Watanabe chose to speak on the subject, "Retrospect and Prospect in the Protestant Mission," and made an impassioned and frank critique of the past weaknesses of the Christian mission in Japan. He insisted that Christianity must put the cross in the center where it belongs, even though it must be an offence. Our guide may be found in the miracle at Cana where Mary told the servants to do whatever Jesus asked of them, relying on the Lord to complete the act of obedience.

CENTENNIAL DINNER

The Centennial dinner, sandwiched in between afternoon and evening sessions on Tuesday, was held at Sendagaya Youth Hall Auditorium. The crowd of twelve hundred Japanese and overseas guests filled the floor and two balconies and enjoyed a delightful supper, which was served ingeniously on trays fixed to the back of the auditorium seats, at the same time as they enjoyed a program of greetings from the representatives of Japanese churches overseas, a musical presentation by a children's choir, and a presentation by two delegates from Thailand of a silver bowl to Dr. Muto, representing the NCCJ.

The Rev. Kentaro Buma, JCWS, expressed appreciation on behalf of the sufferers from the Ise Bay typhoon in the Nagoya area for the relief supplies made possible through Church World Service by gifts from overseas and indicated the continuing serious need in that area due to the approach of winter. Finally, a skit written and directed by the Rev. Shinji Iwamura with the assistance of the youth group of his church depicted humorously the trials and tribulations of the evangelism conducted by the first missionaries.

UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, TOKYO, CONFERS HONORARY DEGREES

At a special service on Wednesday morning at 10:00, the Union Seminary of Tokyo, conferred special degrees upon Chaplain I.L. Bennett, former Chief of Chaplains U.S. Army and one-time chaplain serving in Japan; Methodist Church Gen. Secty. T.T. Brumbaugh; Dr. Paul S. Mayer, former E.U.B. missionary in Japan; Dr. C.W. Iglehart, former Methodist missionary in Japan; and Dr. W.A. Visser't Hooft, WCC Gen. Secty. As a representative of those receiving the degrees, Dr. Visser't Hooft responded with a message. The guests at a special luncheon at the seminary following the service included those receiving the degrees and other overseas guests and Japanese leaders.

KYODAN SPECIAL SERVICE AT SENDAGAYA

In the afternoon on Wednesday, the United Church of Christ in Japan held a centennial-related celebration. More than 6,000 church members and pastors gathered at the City Auditorium for worship and commemoration. With greetings from the Moderator, the Rev. K. Shirai, and two special Bach arrangements by the choir, two addresses were given by Kyodan leaders: the Rev. Kikaku Shimamura, head of general evangelism, spoke on "Harvest of the Centennial" and the Rev. Isamu Omura, Vice-moderator, "Forward into the Second Century." A special lecture was given by a pastor-statesman (Lower House member), the Rev. Nishimura, on "Church and Society," and Dr. Visser't Hooft spoke on "The World Church and Its Expectation from the Kyodan Churches."

A remarkable sacred dance performance was presented by Futaba Hanayagi, telling the story of Mary Magdalene meeting the risen Christ as well as the words of Hymn 520 (Japanese Hymnal) "When Peace Like a River."

WEDNESDAY EVENING YOUTH RALLY -- DEAN YAMAZAKI and DR. KAGAWA.

At a centenary youth rally at the City Auditorium, special music was furnished by the Musashino Conservatory, the U.S. Air Force Band, and the Tokyo Women's College Chorus. Youth representatives from many of the member groups of the NCG took part in the service, with a special exhortation from Dr. Toru Yamazaki, Dean of the Theological School, Doshisha University.

The audience of nearly ten thousand young people were especially attentive to a tape recording of a speech by Dr. Toyohiko Kagawa, whose illness and gradually weakening condition make any travel impossible. Dr. Kagawa declared:

A New age is formed by the young people and new creations, new inventions, and new discoveries are the work of young people.

... their creative desire makes the new age. The one who discovered a new continent did so because he was young. Without young people, it is impossible to attain such discoveries or

Jesus Christ received God's revelation because he was young. If he had been old, he could never have created such a new age. §§§ The New Age is formed by the young creative mind. All famous reformations were accomplished by young people. We must encourage young people to go forward in scholarly work, in art, or in any field. I believe that the new era in Japan has to be brought about by young people. §§§. I hope the young people will make the New Age.

THE OVERSEAS EVANGELISM RALLY CLIMAXED BY PRAYERS, OFFERTING

During Thursday, guests were taken to visit historic Christian places and institutions.

In the evening was held one of the most significant events of the Centennial Week, the Overseas Evangelism Rally held at the large new Yodobashi Church, Tokyo. Five or six hundred Centennial delegates, mostly Japanese but many from other nations, were in attendance.

Presided over by Bishop Tsunenori Takase, the meeting was given an opening note of the missionary "outward look" by Chairman Takeshi Muto, NCC Chairman, in a brief, very earnest introductory message, pointing up the responsibilities of the church as it goes into the second century of mission.

Dr. Charles W. Ranson, IMC, then gave greetings, speaking to the question of the world situation and its challenge to the World Church, which he portrayed as having entered into new relationships within itself, with the Church of Asia coming into a position of partnership and increasing responsibility for joining in the work of the furtherance of the Gospel everywhere.

The General Secretary, United Church of Christ in Thailand, gave a deeply moving address on "What the Churches of Asia Expect of the Church of Japan." He deplored the hitherto scanty mutual understanding of the East Asian peoples, including the Christian circles. A Presbyterian in Thailand, said he, knows more about Presbyterian thought and work in the U.S.A. than he does about its work in Japan. Because the churches are few and weak there is great need to know each other and to pull the load together. Many areas of life are by no means Christianized. Evangelism both geographically and in depth is needed. Secularism, Communism, Nationalism, must be dealt with by the Church. As yet only 3 per cent of Asia's people are Christian. The Philippines has sent 3 missionary couples to Thailand, the Korean (Presbyterian) Church sent 2, South India United Church has furnished 1 couple. The Church of Thailand plans to send a couple to Laos. We understand that Japan is beginning to supply missionaries to a few lands.* Please send some to Thailand. We will try to help you also. We must study together the Christian approach to non-Christian religions. You can contribute much, such as vocational experts. Please take the responsibility, the lead, because we need your help. We are one body in Christ.

The Rev. S. Yuba, a Japanese pastor of long residency in Brazil, made an impassioned plea for more notice to be taken of the outstanding opportunities to evangelize among the nearly 450,000 Japanese in Brazil. Japanese industrial corporations are awake to their chance and are seizing it. Members of the Imperial Household have visited Brazil and the Japanese government has a plan for improving relations. But the

Church is represented by a mere 30 congregations among the Japanese-speaking people there. Let the Church in Japan wake up, and start to give, not being content only to receive, the blessings of the Gospel.

The next address was given by Dr. C. W. Iglehart, who has given almost a half century of missionary service to Japan, before retirement. He is the author of the newly-published history of the Protestant Century in Japan. He expressed high confidence in the potentialities of the second century for the foundation has been well laid, though in a society basically hostile to the Christian faith. It has really been a "foreign mission" in every sense of the word, but magnificently accomplished. Now the Church in Japan is well-equipped, through her own experiences, both trials and triumphs, to help some of the weaker lands build their churches.

Japan is already familiar with the new pattern in Christianity, the ecumenical pattern, through 20 to 30 years of practice. Its resources and skills are greater than that of most Asian nations. It is not accidental that AVACO is serving all of Asia today. Japan has personnel of great talent and training, artistic genius, originality. Was there anyone not profoundly moved by the religious dance yesterday? (Wed.).

The Japanese people have had a rich and valuable discipline of experience during the last century: Imperial power, war-disaster, subsequent resurrection -- a rich heritage to equip you for service to other peoples. Of all peoples you can best understand the Cross of Christ and can best make it known.

The Rev. Gosaku Okada, Chairman of the Overseas Evangelism Committee of the Kyodan spoke last, bringing a climactic appeal. There are two great challenges before the Church today, he said -- mass evangelism and overseas evangelism. Japan must be continually evangelized but along with this is obedience to the Master's commission (Mt 28.19-20) to give all peoples their opportunity to know the saving Gospel. There are great facts to be witnessed to. How can we hold our peace? We are deeply indebted, because of the tremendous investment that has been made by others in Japan, during this past one hundred years, by other Christians of the world. East Asia especially needs our assistance. Resources are great. Mentioning the overseas missions projects of the pre- and post-War periods, he concluded that this is a mere beginning. Indonesia, Thailand, and other places are appealing for help. There must be earnest prayer and a united effort to meet the challenge. To remain dis-united and self-interested is to fail those who depend on us for aid. "Here am I! Send me!" should be our prayer.

Before the deeply stirring meeting came to a close in a veritable ferment of voluntary prayers from all over the meeting place, on the suggestion of a delegate an offering for overseas evangelism was taken up accompanied by tremendous applause from the congregation. Without such an act, the rising enthusiasm of the evening would have seemed to have ended imperfectly.

WOMEN'S DIVISION SPONSORS RALLY FOR WOMEN -- FRIDAY:

Over 1500 delegates, representing all groups affiliated with the National Christian Council filled the auditorium of Joshi Gakuin to over-flowing for the Centennial Rally for Women, planned and sponsored by the Women's Division of the Council.

Beginning at 1:00 p.m., the program recognized especially women who served as missionaries and evangelists for over 30 years. Thirty representatives of these women attended, were presented carnations and Mrs. Isako Takegami, chairman of the Board of the Woman's Division spoke stirring and gratefully of their work. The final worship service was led by the former head of the Women's Division, Mrs. Kinye Sugihara. Among those singled out for honors were: Miss Elizabeth Upton, for over 50 years an independent missionary who has served uniquely in both kindergarten work and work with prisoners, being honored by the Japanese government already for her devotion; Mrs. Ochimi Kubushiro, present head and long time worker with the Women's Christian Temperance Union; and others who have been decorated for contributions to educational and social work.

A series of pantomimes presented by the League of Christian Kindergartens, affiliate of the Women's Division, depicted incidents from the life of Miss Upton, Mrs. Tamaki Uemura, and other leaders. In closing, a service of thanksgiving included a thank-offering which will be used for Rally expenses, for flowers for the tombs of previous women leaders, and for additional needs.

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THE NATIONAL CHRISTIAN COUNCIL IN JAPAN:

Early cooperative work among missionaries dates from 1872 in Yokohama, with organizations ("The Evangelical League," "The League of Churches") dating from 1878. The National Christian Council was established in 1923, the year of the great earthquake. In 1941, it was replaced by the United Church of Christ (Kyodan), and the NCC was re-organized in May, 1948 due to new circumstances of the Church in Japan.

Member bodies now include six denominations and 12 Christian organizations of non-ecclesiastical nature. Denominations are: United Church of Christ in Japan, Episcopal Church in Japan, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Japan, Japan Baptist Convention, the Association of Korean Churches of Christ in Japan, and the Baptist federation. Organizations are: Education Association of Christian Schools, the Japan Bible Society, Japan YMCA and YWCA, Federation of Christian Nursery Schools, WCTU, Japan Christian Endeavor Union, Christian Culture Association, Japan CWS, the "Friends of Jesus" Society, Christian Medical Association, and the Christian Social Work League. Associate members include: Tokyo Union Church, the German Missionary Association, the Conference on Evangelism for the Blind, the Association of Baptist Missionaries, the Japan Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S., and the East Asia German Mission. Annual meetings of delegates are in March to determine program and budget, with interim work carried by an executive council, working through departments and committees. In addition, it has three "Activi-s Commissions"-- Church School Commission, Christian Literature Commission, and the Audiovisual Commission (AVACO).

CHRISTIAN SOCIAL INFLUENCE IN JAPAN:

In a special article for the Japan Times, Shiro Abe, Director of Yokosuka Christian Social Center, pointed to three areas of influence of Christian work on Japanese society: (1) general, (2) Christian Socialist movement, (3) social work.

Although some influence was simly through Western culture, direct influence from Christian thought can be seen in "civil and personal liberties, prison reform, marital morality, spiritual basis of democracy, the equality and worth of all persons, the status of women and legislation for the protection of children." Thus, early opposition to prostitution was to establish "human and civil rights of minors."

The high quality of medicine in Japan was attained early so that no witness in this area has been felt necessary by Christians. The Salvation Army's pioneering employment agency (1905) stimulated the government to set up an agency. The YMCA and YWCA brought sports and camping into prominence. One ought to remember, modestly, that Buddhists, Catholics, and humanists have also done much in aid to the poor and work among children or for education. The incredible scope of Toyohiko Kagawa's work and interest testifies to his prominence: "urban and rural co-ops, cooperative pawn shops, relief drives, world federalism and peace movements, settlement houses and nurseries, orphanages, rural gospel schools, ... production of low-cost meals for workers and construction of emergency housing for returned service men...."

While Christian Socialists have been a moderating influence, opposed to "violence and illegal or radical revolutionary tactics," they have been opposed by the Government as radicals and sometimes forced further to the left, e.g. Sen Katayama, "founder of the first Christian social settlement in Japan (who) became a Communist and led in 1922 founding the Japan Communist Party.

Present Protestant-sponsored social work in Japan includes: "53 rural centers, 18 city settlements, 70 orphanages, 243 day nurseries, 6 welfare homes, 48 hospitals or clinics, 12 special sanatoria, and 45 agencies for working with delinquents, the aged, or ... mothers and children."

THE CHURCH OF JAPAN IN MISSIONARY ENDEAVOR

In an article entitle "The Wave of the Future," Japan Christian Quarterly, October 1959, Tsuyoshi Tadenuma and Kenny Joseph present important facts about Japan's share in the Mission of the Church. Listing all Protestant groups and denominations, it seems that there are now a total of 19 groups supporting 27 missionaries from Japan who are laboring in eight different countries, Asian as well as Brazil and Bolivia.

Future plans include 20 additional persons, now preparing to go as well as projects and offerings for work in seven other countries.

BRIEF NOTES: Kansei Gakuin, Nishinomiya City, Hyogo Prefecture celebrated its 70th anniversary, commemorating its foundation by the late Dr. J. W. Lambuth. Two former presidents of the school attended the celebration, Dr. C.J.L. Bates, 72 year old Canadian evangelist, and Dr. Howard W. Ousterbridge. Dr. Bates served the school for 30 years, holding the presidency from 1932 to his retirement in 1940; Dr. Ousterbridge also taught at the school before becoming president, from which he retired in 1956.

§ § § § The Rev. Kentaro Buma, CWS, reported that through the Japan office there has been distributed a total of 773, 643 lbs. of relief commodities. Work camps of CWS enlisted the aid of 650 persons. Money is now being accepted to buy "futon" (blankets) for victims of the typhoon. § § § § Shikoku Christian College, Zentsuji, inaugurated as its new president on October 9, Dr. Tsuraki Yano, former president of Meiji Gakuin, former General Secty of Christian Higher Education Assn, Vice-chairman of the Ministry of Education Committee on recognition of colleges. A fellow educator, President Oizumi of Kagawa University, paid tribute to Dr. Yano by saying: "Dr. Yano is to the Japanese education profession what the Bank of Japan is to the banks. (He is) 'teacher of teachers!'"

